A

SERMON

Preached before

HIS MAJESTY

at *Whitehal*, *April* 5. 1663.

By the Right Reverend Father in God

B. Lord Biſhop of *Lincoln*, Elect.

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By Him therefore let us offer the Sacrifice of Praiſe to God continually; that is, the Fruit of our *Lips, giving thanks to His Name*; or, *Confeſsing to His Name*, as the Margin reads more agreeable to the Greek.

E have an *Altar* in the Tenth Verſe, and in this we have a *Sacrifice*: But what Altar, and what Sacrifice? for they are ſcandalous words. For the Altar, let that fall, if the Sacrifice cannot ſupport it: But for the Sacrifice, whereof we are now to treat, it is, I confeſs, a word of offence, becauſe there goes under the name of a Chriſtian Sacrifice, that which our Church calls a *blaſphemous fable*, and *dangerous deceit*. Should I leave you without

Art. 31.

any Caution upon that fear and danger in Sacrificing, it would be to little purpoſe to offer at the commending of any: For we are too often troubled more with words, than what they ſignifie. And therefore as the *Orator* adviſeth, when ſuch a caſe ſhall happen *Mitigandas eſſe prius aures*; ſomewhat muſt be ſaid beforehand to remove a prejudice that will fall upon all that ſhall be ſaid after. That which the *Article* ſpeaks of is the Sacrifice of the Maſs, wherein the Prieſts of that Sacrifice ſay, *That Chriſt himſelf is really ſacrificed for the quick and dead*: And for want of this, our Church is not by them allowed to have either Prieſt or Sacrifice.

'Tis true, we pretend not to that Myſtical Art and Chymiſtry, to turn the Elements of Bread and Wine into the Natural Body and Blood of *Chriſt*, by which alone they make themſelves Prieſts, and *Him* the Sacrifice. I put in no *claim* therefore from this Text, either to that Prieſt, or this Sacrifice, but yet to a right in both, but both of another kinde: For the Sacrifice, the Text is clear, and the Prieſt follows of courſe; there can be no Sacrifice without him. And it is as clear too, That it is not the Sacrifice of the Maſs, though

Chriſt

Christ himself be in it; for 'tis *he* whom we first meet with in the Text, *By him.*] Here indeed *he* is, but not in the quality of a Sacrifice to be offered, as in the Mass, whereof *he* is the *Matter*, but as a *Mediator* onely. It is not *Him*, but *By him* we are to offer.

Now seeing we may be secure, it is not *that* we might possibly fear; let us see what it is we may safely, and must necessarily perform.

We are first to *offer* a Sacrifice *to God.*

2. That for the *kinde*, is *Eucharistical*, not Propitiatory.

3. The *Matter* of it is to be, not the *Fruit* of our Fields, or of our Flocks, but of *our Lips.*

4. Not every fruit that grows upon the lips, but χειλέων ὁμολογέντων lips *Confessing to his* (*i. e. Gods*) *Name.*

5. This confessing here is not *of him*, (though that be otherwise necessary; for he that denies him, shall be denied by him) but *To him*, and that makes it a Sacrifice.

6. It must be *to Him*, and not to any *Creature*, *Saint*, or *Angel.* Praise them we may, but offer a Sacrifice of praise, we must not.

7. It is not a Sacrifice to be done at starts, and upon occasions, but *continually*, *a daily Sacrifice.*

8. It

8. It is to be *offered by Him*, that is, by *Christs merits and mediation* 'Tis that which gives power and efficacy to this and all our services, which would be nothing worth, if we came in our own names.

Lastly, You have the *Reason*, why all this, *Therefore*; and that sends us back to the Twelfth Verse, *Wherefore Jesus, that he might sanctifie the people by his Blood, suffered without the Gate.* That he suffered for us, and that he suffered without the Gate, are the reasons, why *by him*, and why *of us*. *By him*, because by the sacrificing of himself, he made our peace with God. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God for it.* And why *of us*? Because *he suffered without the Gate*; whither the *Jews* that were within the Gate must go out and follow him, in the next Verse, leaving their *City* and *Sanctuary*. And we the *Gentiles* that are without the Gate already, may finde him in our own Territories, that so both *Jew* and *Gentile* ὁμολογοῦντες joyntly together, as the word imports, *May confess to the honor of his Name.*

And as *Therefore* carries in it the reason of our duty, so it doth in that some accommodation it hath to the time: For this is *Passion Sunday*;

Sunday; and why ſo called, we learn from *Rupertus* and others, becauſe the *Jews* on this day met together, to conſult of, and contrive the death of *our Lord*; which, not many days after, they effected.

It will not be fit (I confeſs) for that reaſon, to anticipate the *Meditations* proper to that Solemnity. Yet as now the *Paſsion* was in preparation and conception by them, it will be ſo far a keeping of time with it, if we alſo now ſhall prepare a Sacrifice of praiſe for it, that we may be fit then to honor God by confeſsing to his Name, the wonderful mercies and unſpeakable benefits we receive by the *Paſsion* and *Reſurrection* of *our Lord.*

By him therefore let us offer the Sacrifice of Praiſe to God continually, that is, the Fruit of our lips confeſsing to his Name.

And that we may the better perform our *Sacrifice of Praiſe*, *Let us by him alſo offer a Sacrifice of Prayer, &c.*

THat we are to *offer* a *SACRIFICE to God*, is here ſo plainly enjoyned, and ſo punctually deſcribed, both for *matter* and *manner* in every *circumſtance*, that one would think it ſtrange it ſhould be neglected, and more I

ſtrange it ſhould be contemned by any. But for our ſelves, if we would be clear in this *matter* (as every good man ſhould deſire to be) it is fit we call our ſelves to account when, and how we perform it.

The *Antient* and *Primitive Church* (of whom this may beſt be learned) did, in conſcience of their duty herein, compoſe ſeveral *Liturgies*, that by them they might have a *Publick daily Sacrifice* for the honor and worſhip of *God*; as that of St. *James* at *Jeruſalem*, St. *Marks* at *Alexandria*; after that, St. *Chryſoſtoms* at *Antioch*, St. *Baſils* at *Cæſaria*, St. *Gregories* at *Rome*; and indeed, there was no Church without one. They that wrote *Apologies* for the *Chriſtians*, being of the *Heathen* accuſed of *Atheiſm*, becauſe they were never ſeen to offer ſacrifice to the Gods; for anſwer to *that*, had recourſe to this *Sacrifice of Praiſe* in the Text.

The Copies of thoſe *Antient Liturgies*, as they come now to our hands, have no doubt ſuffered the fate of time, that is, ſome changes, by which the prepoſterous zeal of ſome hath overcharged them with numerous, and ſometimes ſuperſtitious *Additions*; yet the ſubſtance and intendment of them was to perform this duty. And therefore *our Church*, that never was

was of the minde to fling away Chaff and Corn, both at once, *That they might not want what all Churches ever had; so ordered our *Liturgy*, that by it we might with safety and true devotion, daily *Sacrifice* to the praise and honor of God Wherein they have followed, not onely *Precept*, but *Pattern* also from this Text, as by a short parallel between them, may visibly appear; as first,

The Text calls us to a *Sacrifice*, and the †*Liturgy* is that *Sacrifice*. *Antioch* was the place where *Christs Disciples* were first called *Christians*; and *Antioch* is the place where the *Christian Service* is first called a *Liturgy*. We finde the *Disciples* met together at their *Liturgy* Λειτουργούντων δὲ αὐτῶν τῷ Κυρίῳ καὶ νηστευόντων, which we translate, *Fasting and Ministring to the Lord*; for λειτουργία properly signifies a *Publick Ministration*; to which, the word used by the *Church*, fits well, calling it *Common Prayer*; and is so expounded by St. *Luke* himself in the next Verse, *When they had Fasted and Prayed*. This *Liturgy* or *Ministring to God*, must needs be in something for *His honor* and *service*, which is properly a *Sacrifice*.

Secondly, As it is a Sacrifice to *God*, so to none but *God*: We call it *Divine Service*, and so we use it. No *Creature*, *Saint*, or *Angel*, hath

* [illegible]

† 1. [illegible]

Acts 13.
Vers. 2.

Vers. 3.

2. 11.

any part in it, as in ſome they have. *Praiſe* them we may for the good ſervice they have done the *Church*; but offer a *Sacrifice of Praiſe* we may not. It was never heard, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*, *Offero tibi Sacrificium, Petre*, or *Paule*, or *Cypriane*. And though the invocation of them ſimply be not a Sacrifice, yet it is ſuch, when uſed in *Divine Service* in the place of one. And that it is not heard in our *Liturgy*, it is no doubt, with their good leave and liking too. The *Angel* *Rev.* 19. will anſwer for *that* Order: When St. *John* would have worſhipp'd him, *Do it not* (ſays he) *I am your fellow ſervant*. And the Apoſtles *Paul* and *Barnabas* for *their* Order, when the men of *Lyſtra* would have ſacrificed to them, they cryed out, *Sirs, why do you theſe things? we alſo are men of the like Paſsions with you.* That they are *Gods* friends, intitles them to no more than a place in his Court to *do him ſervice*, not in his Throne to *receive* any. And therefore that honor which *God* hath not given to another, we have not given to them in our *Liturgy*.

Acts 14. 15.

III. Thirdly, The Sacrifice of the Text is *Euchariſtical*, a *Sacrifice of Praiſe*, and ſo is our *Liturgy*. We pretend to no expiation or ſatisfaction for ſins, either of quick or dead:

We

We ów *that* to a better Sacrifice. The price of *Redemption* is greater than any service we can do: It cost more to redeem our souls, we must let that alone for ever; and therefore in the *Liturgy*, our Sacrifice is set to no higher key, than, *We praise thee, O God, &c.* Psal. 49.

Fourthly, In every Sacrifice there must be something offered; and that in the Text is *the fruit of our Lips*: For though the Root of this and every good service, must be in the *heart*, yet the fruit must sprout outwardly in the *lips*. For though a *vertue* may sometimes be accomplished in the heart onely, yet neither this nor *Prayer* it self, if private or mental onely, (though otherwise of excellent use) will amount to a Sacrifice, till it come into the lips; for no proper Sacrifice is invisible: And therefore in our *Liturgy*, as we pray, that *God* would *open our lips*; so we practise when we joyn with the Priest in the *Confessions* and *Psalms*, and in such things where he alone is not concerned. IV.

Fifthly, It is not every fruit that grows upon the lips, is fit to make a Sacrifice, but χειλέων ὁμολογούντων, *lips that confess to his Name.* But how comes confessing more than any thing else, to relate to a Sacrifice? It is thus. The end V.

and

and import of every thing offered to *God* in Sacrifice *Eucharistical*, is a Profession and Acknowledgment of *some blessing* bestowed upon the Sacrificer; and so either expressly or implicitely is joyned with it. As for instance; At the offering of the *first-fruits*, they are commanded to make a *Confession* in this form.

Deut. 26. 3. *Thou shalt go unto the Priest, and say thus unto him, I confess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come into the Country which the Lord sware unto our Fathers to give us*; That is, in the *first-fruits* they confest the Land that bore them to be of *Gods* gift. Now of such confessions as these, the whole body and matter of the *Liturgy* is framed.

1. Our first address and approach into *Gods* presence is, by a *Confession of our sins*, which is a putting off our shoes with the defilements we have contracted in our ways; for the place and presence is holy. And by this we make Profession and Acknowledgment of *Gods* perfect purity and holiness, in that we presume not to come into his presence, till we first put off our uncleanness.

2. Then follows the *Absolution*; and this is another Confession of his infinite mercy, that he is willing to forgive our sins, and to use

use the ministry of sinful man, to confer it upon us.

Then we have the *Hymns* and *Psalms*, which is a third Confession to his Name, whereby we do with chearful and thankful hearts, acknowledge him to be the *Author* of all the good we enjoy, or hope for. 3.

For *Lessons* we have the Scriptures read, and they are written for our learning: In that we confess, *God* to be our *infallible Teacher*, to whose *Oracles* we submit to be guided, both in faith and manners. 4.

And because the *Rules* of both lie diffused through the whole body of Scripture, we have them summ'd up in the *Creeds* and *Decalogue*. In the *Creeds* we acknowledge our faith in his wisdom, who hath so mysteriously contrived the means and way of our Salvation, before unknown to Men and Angels: And in the *Decalogue* we confess his Dominion, That he is our *Lawgiver*; and to that our *Patron* also, not onely gives us *Laws* but *Grace*, and *hearts* to keep them.

In the *Collects*, *Prayers*, and *Supplications*, for the supply of our wants and necessities, as well temporal as spiritual, we acknowledge *every good gift, and every perfect giving to come down from the Father of lights*. 5.

But

But the chief of all the Confessions is that, for which our *Saviour* instituted a Sacrament. *Do this in remembrance of me*; that is, in Commemoration and Acknowledgment of what he by his blood hath purchased for us: For we must not think, as some do, that a Sacrament should be instituted for relief onely of a bad memory, like a thred tied about the finger; but solemnly to celebrate the memory of the greatest of blessings that *God* ever bestowed upon men; the *Redemption* of our Souls by the blood of his dear *Son*: And therefore this Confession carries away from all the rest, the name of an *Eucharist*, a Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving.

By this we see the *matter* of the Sacrifice of the Text fulfilled in the *Liturgy* by *Confessing to his Name.*

VI. The next thing to be observed is, *the circumstance of time* when this Sacrifice is to be offered, and that is *continually.* In conformity to this, our Service is a continual daily sacrifice, a *Morning* and *Evening Prayer.* And though the greatest benefit of this belongs to those that daily attend it; yet because it is the *Publick Sacrifice* of the *Church*, all that are Members of *that* have their part and interest in it, though they

they be abſent, yet not in equal meaſure. The *preſent* are intitled to the benefit as a *Sacrifice* offered *by them*; the *abſent* as a *Sacrifice* offered *for them*. For this is our *juge Sacrificium* that is perpetually burning upon the Altar, for the ſervice of *God*, and in behalf of every member of the Church, that doth not *ponere obicem*, ſet a bar upon himſelf by his wilful neglect of it, and oppoſition to it.

VII. Laſtly, *By him* we are to offer; 'Tis his merit and mediation that crowns the *Sacrifice*. In vain ſhould ſinful man approach ſo great a *Majeſty* in his own Name; but *by him who hath made our peace with God, and ſanctified us by his blood*, we may finde acceſs to him. This *by him* gives the Characteriſtical difference of the *Chriſtian ſacrifice* from all others; for otherwiſe the *Sacrifice of Praiſe* was common to all times *before*, and *under* the Law. You finde in many *Pſalms* a Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, but in none of them *by him*, in *Chriſts* name. *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my Name* (ſays our *Saviour*) but hereafter his Name will give vertue and efficacy to all our ſervices: And therefore to gain ſo gracious an *Advocate* with the *Father*, our Prayers and Supplications are in the *Liturgy* offered up in

St. Joh. 16. 24.

his Name, concluding always, *By the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

THus you see the Text exemplified throughout in the *Liturgy*; and the *Liturgy* therefore warranted by the Text. I could not promise my self time enough to take a view of all the particulars, I have therefore reduced that I have to say at this time, to this one Observation in gross.

That our Liturgy or Common Prayer is a true Sacrifice to God, for the praise and honor of His Name.

And to this I shall not *beg* the assent of those that like it not, but *require it*; and by the authority of the same *Apostle* in an other place, *Rom.* 15. 8. where we read, That *Jesus Christ was a Minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made unto the Fathers.* Now what that promise was, he tells us in the next Verse. *That the Gentiles might glorifie God for his mercy, as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing praises unto thy Name.* Here are Confessions, and

and Praises, and Singing, by which *God* is to be glorified among the Gentiles: They that will be *Christians* upon other terms, do in effect make *God* a lier, who promised it should be so.

And yet they that would not have it so, are very many, and of many sorts; and though I cannot think the worse of it, that it lies under a popular dislike; yet because it is no ill way of learning our duties by the folly of those that oppose it, I shall give you a short account of them.

The *ATHEIST* first charges it with such weapons as he hath, *scorn* and *drollery*: That these *Forms*, and *Ceremonies*, and *Pageantry* of worshipping *God* in *Liturgies*, is but a trade invented by the *Priests*, to get their living, and according to the priviledge of *Inventors*, they claim a *Monopoly*, that they onely may have the *offering* of that *Sacrifice*. 1.

It is not strange, that they *who have not God in their hearts*, as the Prophet *David* speaks of those fools, should have any sacrifice in their *lips for him*. In this onely, I confess, they are no fools. If there be no God, we need not trouble our selves about a *Sacrifice*; but if there be a God, let them take the *fool* again;

for *Sacrifice* is his due. Never was any Nation ſo barbarous, that fancied a *Deity*, but thought it neceſſary to make ſome teſtification and acknowledgment of it by *Sacrifice*

II. To theſe we may joyn the whole *Herd* of *SECTARIES*, who are but a kinde of *godly Atheiſts*. When the late ſtorm that raged amongſt us, brought with it thoſe *Locuſts* that over-ſpread the Nation; though their whole buſineſs was to deſtroy, yet of all moſt virulently the *Publick Service* of the *Church*. And hence it is, that in the practice of their devotions, you ſhall finde nothing that looks like the *offering* of a *Sacrifice of praiſe for the honor of God*: But their meeting together, is onely to tell one another their dreams and ridiculous phanſies, belying the *holy Spirit* an hour or two, and then depart. And ſo I leave them.

And come to another ſort of enemies, whom I intend more particularly to call to an account, and the rather, becauſe they ſeem to allow of a *Publick Sacrifice of praiſe*, as far as a free *Directory* will go; but for a ſet and ſtinted *Liturgy* (as they call it) they have it in abomination, as appears by the heap of accuſations they bring againſt it.

1. *That*

1. *That it is a polluted unclean thing.*
2. *That it is a dead Sacrifice.*
3. *A Book-service of the Letter, and not of the Spirit.*
4. *A Childish.*
5. *Confused.*
6. *Improper, impertinent service.*
7. *A tedious service.*
8. *A lame sacrifice, full of defects.*

And lastly, *A blinde one, that edifies not.*

All this dirt and filth they cast upon it, is easily wiped off with a right understanding of this onely general Doctrine of the Text, *That it is a sacrifice of praise to God for the honor of His Name.*

First, They say it is a polluted unclean thing, taken out of the *Popish Missal* and *Breviary*: But if it be truly according to the pattern in the Text, as ye have heard, *a Sacrifice of praise to God*, we need not be troubled through what hands it passed before it came to us: For as we are not ashamed to confess that our *Religion* is not a *new*, but *Reform'd Religion*; so, nor need we be ashamed to say, We worship *God*, not by a *new*, but *Reform'd Liturgy*: And so our *Faith* and *Religion* are both of a piece, and both as old as the Text. I.

Secondly,

II. Secondly, They ſay it is a dead Sacrifice, made up of empty *Forms* and *Ceremonies*, void of that life and affection which is neceſſary in *Gods ſervice*. If there be that want of affection in our Prayers, it is a fault, lie where it may: But certainly the *Forms* are not guilty of it. It is injuſtice to require that in a *Sacrifice*, which belongs onely to him that *offers* it. The *Church* that compoſed the *Forms* cannot create *affection*. If we come to this *Sacrifice* and leave our hearts behinde us, I know where the blame muſt lie.

But you will ſay, you do not accuſe *Set Forms*, for want of life in themſelves, but that by the continual repetition of the ſame things, they be-dead *affection* in thoſe that ſhould have it. And how, I pray, ſhould that be? If the ſenſe of *real wants* and *bleſsings*, which are always the ſame, cannot keep up our *affections*, how ſhould a new ſet of words do it? Can we imagine that *God* ſhould be taken with variety and ſhift of phraſes, or that the *affection* that takes heat from them, will render the *ſervice* more acceptable to *God*?

And therefore, when they complain that their devotion is tired with nothing but *Almighty and moſt merciful Father*, in the *Morning*; and

and *Almighty and most merciful Father*, in the *Evening*; and the same over and over again every day: That complaint did never lie against the *Jews* daily Sacrifice, which was a type of ours; that there was a *Lamb* in the *morning*, and a *Lamb* again at *evening*; and the same over again every day in the year. When our *Saviour* at his last agony in the *Garden*, three times retired himself from his *Disciples* to pray, he used still the same form of words without any change, St. *Matth.*26.44. And who dares say he wanted *ability* to vary *his prayer*, or can say, he wanted *affection*, though he did not? For as St. *Luke* relates it, *He prayed so earnestly, that his swet was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground*; and then sure there was no want of *affection*; for when our zeal is at the hottest, we do not use to swet at our prayers. St. Luk. 22. 44.

III. I go on to a third charge; That Set Forms, instead of helping us, hinder the Spirit by which we should pray. The truth is, Such as the Spirit may be, and too often useth to be, it ought rather to be bound with chains, then left at liberty; under a Form of Praying, to *Libel* their Governors, or whom, or what they please to bring into hatred with the people: But for the true Spirit of Prayer, that cannot be

be tyed with words: For they are utterly mistaken that think the Spirit of Prayer, ſupplies any defect of words or phraſes; for that very Text of St. *Paul*, whereon they ground it, confutes them; *Rom.* 8. 26. *The ſpirit helpeth our infirmities.* But in what? not in words; for what the Spirit ſupplies are there ſaid to be ἄῤῥητα, *not ſpoken at all*; or, as we tranſlate it, *which cannot be uttered.* What then doth it ſupply? *It maketh interceſsion for us with groans, which cannot be uttered.* The true Spirit of Prayer conſiſts in groans, in zeal, and fervency; and that, where it is, will animate and put life into any Form of Prayer. They who call Forms of their own making, or borrowing, con'd without Book, Praying by the Spirit, do both cheat the people, and blaſpheme the *Holy Ghoſt.*

IV. A fourth Objection is, That it is but a Book-Sacrifice, a Reading-Service, which any childe may do. They complain it ſeems of eaſe: If *God* ſhould require a harder thing of us, as no doubt there are many harder things to be done, do them we muſt. The eaſineſs lays the greater obligation upon us: How ridiculous would this exception appear againſt the *Legal Sacrifices!* A Butcher could kill

kill and dress a *Lamb*, as well as a *Priest*. This is a false, deceitful weight. *Gods service* is not to be weighed by *the labor* of doing, but by *the relation* to him, for whom it is done: And therefore King *Solomon*, when, by the advice of his Father upon his death-bed, he call'd to account the chief Leaders in the rebellion of *Adoniah*, as *Joab* that commanded in chief, and *Abiathar* the *High Priest*, made no question of putting *Adoniah* and *Joab* to death; but for *Abiathar*, though he deprived him of his office, yet he spared his life. And why? he gives no other reason but this, *Because he bore the Ark before his Father David.* But was that a work of such merit and difficulty? Could not any Porter do as much? it was but carrying of a Chest. *Solomon* did not take his measure by that. That *Sacred Chest*, the *Ark* was a *Symbol* of *Gods* presence; it had relation to his *Service*, and that he preferred before his own; for *Adoniah* was his Brother of the half-blood, and *Joab* his cosin-german.

You that are the *Kings servants* here in Court, do not weigh the merit and honor of your places, which you justly have, by the pains and difficulty of your service, which we know in many is little enough, but by the great-

neſs of the *Maſter* for whom you do it. Children may be able to read the Book, but not therefore fit to *offer* the *Sacrifice*.

V. They are troubled with the rude, confuſed noiſe that is made by the people, in anſwering to the *Confeſſions* and *Pſalms*. It ſeems their ears are as tender as their conſciences, and both alike out of tune: For this is a *Publick Sacrifice*, ὁμολόγησις in the Text, *i. e.* a *Confeſſing together*. Now there can be no communication of men together, but by ſpeech, and therefore of neceſſity it muſt be the *Fruit of our Lips*. But while we, in obedience to that, pray *God to open our Lips*, they teach the people to *ſhut* them. They take it very ill, that they are ſilenced, though they deſerve it, and yet ſtick not to ſilence the whole *Congregation*, without any offence or fault of theirs.

VI. They ſay it is an improper and impertinent Service: We uſe ſuch *Hymns* and *Pſalms* for our *Praiſes* and *Thankſgivings* as are not proper and appliable to us: For how can any one that is a Man, ſay in the *Magnificat*, *Thou haſt regarded the lowlineſs of thy handmaid*? Or how can it be ſeaſonable for all, eſpecially young men, to ſay in the *Nunc dimittas*, *Lord now let thy ſervant depart in peace*.

For

For answer to this, and the rest of that kinde: It is but turning to the Doctrine of the Text, as we have done in all the rest. The *Liturgy* is the Churches *Publick Sacrifice of Praise*; and in that we are not onely to give thanks for *blessings* immediately conferred upon our persons, but upon us with the whole Church, by the intervention of others. For in the *Blessed Virgin* we do all partake of the *grace* done to her, being taken to be the *Mother* of *our Lord.* And in *old Simeon* we rejoyce at the sight of *that salvation*, which was *a Light to us Gentiles, as well as a glory to the people of Israel.*

They are offended with the length of the Service, which makes it not onely tedious in it self, but injurious also by hindring the *Sermon.* To measure the length first: If we lay our line to it, you will not finde it so. It takes up but a very short part of the whole time which *God* has bestowed upon us; of which enough we have, and too much we take many times for our rest and sleep, enough for our own necessary business, and a good *portion* besides for our pleasures and lawful *delights.* Can we think an hour or two spared out of all this, too long for *Gods service?* or a *Lamb* too much for him, who has bestowed VII.

the *whole flock* upon us? The tediouſneſs which is cauſed by the *length* of the *Service*, is cured by the *end*. It muſt needs be a leſs trouble to us, if we conſider it to be *an honor for God*. To ſay no more, How can we think thoſe *Prayers* too long, in which we our ſelves ſue for *eternity*?

Nevertheleſs, if the *length* of the *Liturgy* ſhould, as they ſay, prove a hinderance to *Preaching*, I had ſo much the leſs to ſay for it: But how that ſhould be, I underſtand not. The *Wiſe man* aſſures us, *there is a time for all things*, and ſure then there is a time for *two* things, *Prayer* and *Preaching* both. But poſſibly we may be ſo ſurpriſed, that there is not time for both; The *Caſe* of *Conſcience* here will be, which of them may beſt be ſpared. The *Prayers* are to *God*, the *Sermons* to us; the *Prayers* for *Gods honor*, the *Sermons* for our profit. In this caſe, I think I may ſafely leave every man to be his own Caſuiſt, and go on to the next.

VIII. It is defective, and ſo a lame Sacrifice. How inconſiſtent are their complaints, and how hard are they to be pleaſed? It is both too long and too ſhort. They mean it is too long in the whole, and too ſhort in the parts. In the *Confeſſion*

Confession of sins, in the *Thanksgivings*, in the *Collects*, many material things omitted. The Scriptures read in broken pieces, and not in order.

These would not be counted *defects*, if we considered their *end* and *use* in the *Liturgy*, which is to be a *Sacrifice of praise to God*, for that is sufficiently attained by them as they are there used.

It is true, if we respect these *duties* in reference to their immediate *proper effects*, the *common Forms* are *insufficient*; for no man may presume of *Remission of sins*, unless he confess to *God* the particulars wherein he hath offended. Nor can be *truly thankful* to him for the *blessings*, whereof he makes no particular acknowledgment: Nor can attain to a *full* and *clear knowledge* of the Scriptures that reads not *all*, and in *order*. All this is easily granted.

But they are utterly mistaken in the use of a *Liturgy*, that would have it to be a *common store* to furnish out every *duty* and *vertue*, any further than to serve for the publick honoring, and praising of *God*: For if particulars should be named, wherein all are not concerned, how can they truly and heartily say, *Amen*? And likewise, when some *portions* onely of Scripture

Scripture are read, it is to ſuit the preſent occaſion and ſolemnity. And for particular *Confeſsions* and *Thankſgivings*, if men were ſo *well-affected*, and ſo *well-acquainted* with their own Souls, as they ſhould be; when *general words* are uſed, they may if they pleaſe, reflect upon their own particulars; and ſo render the *Publick Service*, an advantage alſo to their *private intereſt* and *profit*.

IX. I will adde but one exception more. They ſay it is a blinde Sacrifice, and edifies not. To edifie is to contribute to the building of us up in *faith* or *godlineſs*; and then *not edifying*, the meaning muſt be, that it is good for nothing. And truly, if it be ſo, it is but reaſon we ſhould part with it.

But poſſibly when they ſay, *It doth not edifie*, it may have ſome other meaning in it. They may ſay *it edifies not*, becauſe they like it not, or are not pleaſed and ſatisfied with the *uſe* of it, or, which is nearer; the true meaning of the word, there is nothing of *inſtruction* in it, which they have not heard a thouſand times before.

They who come to *Prayers* for theſe *ends*, may indeed be diſappointed, becauſe they come without their errant. This is a *Sacrifice*

for the praise and honor of God; if it edifies *that*, we have no cause to complain. A *Sermon*, I confess, may fit our turns better in both these respects, if it be as it should be: It is no doubt a more pleasing entertainment of the time, if it be to edifie our liking; and fitter for instruction, if it be to edifie *our learning*. But then to say, *Divine Service* doth not thus edifie, is to blame the *Prayers*, because they are not a *Sermon*. You would take it ill, as well you might, if I should except against *Sermons*, because they are not *Prayers*, *i. e.* a Sacrifice of praise for the worship of *God*, as certainly they are not. But let both have their *dues*, and they are both good *edifiers*; The *Sermon* of *Faith* and *Knowledge*, the other of the *Praise* and *Worship of God*.

Yea, that part, which, of all the rest, seems least to edifie, The *Hymns*, and *Psalms*, and *Anthems* with Musick, edifie the praise of *God*. *I will praise the name of God with a song, and magnifie it with thanksgiving*, *Psal.* 69. 30. Yea, the very *instruments* themselves have their part in praising *God*. *Therefore will I praise thee, and thy faithfulness, O God, playing upon an Instrument of Musick. Unto Thee will I sing upon the Harp, O thou holy One of Israel*, *Psal.* 71. 20. This perhaps

haps may be allowed to *David*, to uſe the Art wherein he excelled, and may agree with the *Jewiſh ſervice*, but not with the *Chriſtian*. Nay St. *Paul*, in the place I named before, aſſures us, That it was a promiſe made to the *Fathers*, that *Chriſtians* ſhould ſo glorifie *God*, by *Confeſsing to Him*, and *Singing to His Name*, the very *Singing* is not omitted; and that not *of Him* onely, but *to Him*; which ſeems ſo ridiculous to ſome, to ſing *our Prayers*, or any thing that is offered to *God*: But it did not ſo to him that knew it better; *Pſal.* 104. 33. *I will ſing unto the Lord, as long as I live; I will ſing praiſes unto my God, while I have my being.* What ever others think, he was reſolved to live and die in it.

Rom. 15. 8.

I ſhall trouble you with no more of their *Objections*: Theſe onely I have taken out of a greater heap, becauſe they are ſuch as confront the *Plain Doctrine*, and *Letter* of the *Text*, and are the moſt *popular inſinuations* wherewith unwary people have been deluded

But you will ſay, though we ſee no reaſon to *approve* of theſe men, yet have we not reaſon to *pitty* them? For they are content to looſe their *Livings* for their *Conſciences*. What they looſe, I cannot ſay; but for *pittying* them, I ſhould

should be apt enough, if I did not see some Gallants venture more for a young wanton Mistress, than others for a chast and sober wife. If they be so fond of their *new Directory* and *Covenant*, as young lovers are in the first heat of their *affection*, who say, That they had rather beg together, than part; who can help it? Yet I will hope that a little more time, and a little less Indulgence, which uses to make the one, will make the other wiser too.

And so I leave them, and come to *Our selves*, whose Judgments have not been so far corrupted as to be enemies to the *Liturgy*; yet, I know not how, something hath so poisoned our Affections, that we are not so good friends to it as might be wished. We care but little to come to it, and have as little respect when we are at it; we sit it out, or talk it out, so as nothing seems to be more impertinent, and wherein we are lesse concerned, then in this Service. Why will you go to Church? say they; there's nothing but Prayers. That is in words at length. There's nothing but praising and honouring God.

It is not possible, that any could be thus bold with their Creator, if they did not de-

ceive themſelves with a perſwaſion that a full amends may be made him another way. That obedience to Gods Commands, a vertuous and godly life is the beſt Sacrifice *He that keepeth the Law*, ſaith the Son of *Sirach*, *bringeth Offerings enough.* And *David*, an Author of more credit, tells us of a *Sacrifice of Righteouſneſſe.* And the *Apoſtle* in this chapter, *To do good and to communicate forget not, for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed.* Theſe are, and every other act of Vertue, may be a *Sacrifice*, and God honoured by them: But yet not ſuch as will ſerve to ſatisfie the Duty of the Text. The Sacrifice of obedience is *Metaphorical, i. e. God* accepts it as well as if it had been a Sacrifice, that is, ſomething given to himſelf. But the Sacrifice of praiſe is *proper* without a Metaphor. The original word θυσία, I confeſs imports ſomething to be deſtroyed, but that is meer accidental to the notion of Sacrifice. It doth diſtinguiſh the kinde, but not conſtitute the nature of it, which is accompliſhed by offering ſomething to God in acknowledgment of him. And for this uſe, *the fruit of our lips* is as proper, as the fruit of our flocks, or of our fields, ever were.

Eccluſ. 35. 1.

Pſal. 4. 5.

Verſ. 16.

So

So likewise the honor which God receives from our *obedience*, differs from that of Sacrifice; for *that* is onely of consequence, and by argumentation, *i. e.* It suits with the *nature* and *will* of God; as we say, Good servants are an honor to their Masters, by reflection: But the honor by Sacrifice is of direct and special intendment, it hath no other use, and is a distinct vertue from all other acts of *obedience*, and of a different obligation.

I should not trouble you with these nice distinctions, if they did not carry with them matter of important consequence; least a *necessary service* should be shuffled up, and quite lost in the croud of other duties. For, though God hath the *honor of obedience* and a *vertuous life*, if we deny him the honor of a Sacrifice besides, we rob him of his due; and a greater Sacrilege we cannot commit: For that which goes upon the *common account* of Sacrilege, robs God onely of things dedicated for *his service*; (and yet that crime hath fired the nests of those, that took *Coals from the Altar*, to warm their own *harths*) but this is

the robbing God of the Service it ſelf, to which the other is but an *acceſſory*.

It is a fallacie, and piece of practick ſophiſtry that cozens the world, for men to think themſelves diſcharged of one duty by the zeal they bear to another; as if God were not rob'd ſo long as we leave him any thing.

Now, as it is well worth our care, that *this* Service be not loſt in the crowd of other duties, ſo will it be much more, that it be not loſt in worſe company, in a throng of Vices. And loſt it will be, when the vertue of it is gone. *A fruitful land is made barren by the ſins of them that dwell therein.* The ſame cauſe will make our Prayers as fruitleſs as our fields. To honour God with our *lips*, and diſhonour him with our *lives*; to be ſtrict at Prayers, and looſe to all diſorders; The *Presbyterian* pretenſions cannot make our *Sacrifice* ſo abominable as our ſins can: They make God complain of that which he himſelf commanded, Iſai. 1. 11. *To what purpoſe is the multitude of your Sacrifices unto me, ſaith the Lord; I am full with the burnt offerings of Rams, and the fat of fed Beaſts.* And again, *Bring no more vain Oblati-*

Pſal. 107. 34.

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ons; *Incense is an abomination unto me*: So it was with the Jewes Sacrifice; and the Christians will fare no better, ver. 15. *When ye spred forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, and when ye make many Prayers I will not hear:* Whence grows the displeasure that God takes against his owne Service, but from this? *Your hands are full of blood.* He will accept no *Sacrifice* from polluted hands. And therefore, to reconcile him to his own Service, he puts us into this course, vers. 16. *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek Judgement, relieve the oppressed, plead for the widow.*

If we come thus minded and prepared to Gods Altar, and offer the Sacrifice of Praise to the honour of his Name, we may with confidence expect, what God in the same case promised, 1 Sam. 2. 30. *Them that honour me, I will honour.*

To conclude. All that I have said hitherto is only to vindicate *Gods Service* from contempt, and to restore it to some of the respect due to it. And this, though the *froward times* did not need, cannot I hope be thought an ill office for

for a *Sermon*, once to be an Advocate for *Prayers*, seeing Prayers will alwayes do as much for the Sermon, be an Advocate to God to bring down a blessing upon it. As the Church teacheth us to do, so let us pray, *That the words which we have heard with our outward ears may, &c.*

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 19. Line 26. *for* Faith and Religion, *read* Faith and Worship, Page 25. Line 24. *for* portion, *read* proportion.

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